

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 10, 2002

The Honorable Colin Powell
The Secretary of State
Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We wish to thank you for your efforts at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children last month. The clear position stated by Ambassador Sichan Siv concerning abortion, family structure and abstinence was very helpful in establishing a pro-family agenda for the Summit and withstanding the intense pressure of the European delegates and the Rio Group.

In particular, we appreciate your efforts to oppose language that endorses abortion and independent reproductive rights for minors. We whole-heartedly agree with the Ambassador's statement, "that in no case should abortion be promoted as a method of family planning." We further agree that the United States should in no way endorse abortion in United Nations documents and, family planning should be a voluntary choice—wholly consistent with the social, religious, and cultural values of nations and peoples. We wish to reaffirm that families and communities are best suited to handle the issue of reproductive health services for adolescents.

We heartily commend the decision to regard "various forms of the family" as only single parents and extended families. Efforts to expand the definition of the family to include homosexual partnerships and other unique arrangements are detrimental to the fundamental unit of society. This is especially true with respect to marriage, adoption and issues of child rearing that contribute so much to the well being and health of children.

We also appreciate the Administration's advocacy of abstinence at the Summit. As you know, abstinence education is the single most effective means of preventing teenage pregnancy and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS. As has been reported in the May 27th edition of *The New Republic* (a copy of which is enclosed), abstinence and fidelity have been demonstrated to be effective in Africa to reduce the spread and prevalence of HIV/AIDS. Uganda's approach follows a simple formula: ABC—Abstain, Be Faithful, or wear a Condom—in order of emphasis and effectiveness. Some studies have suggested that this prevention model, if implemented in South Africa, would save 3.2 million lives between 2000 and 2010. In light of this staggering possibility, we respectfully ask that you make abstinence education a top priority

as you seek to find solutions to the issues of teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Thank you for your efforts on these weighty issues. We look forward to working with you to ensure that abstinence, life and family are the hallmark of our nation's efforts to assure the best interests for the health, well-being, and futures of children around the world.

Sincerely,

Ernst J. Lohr

Dave Wehler

Joseph R. Pitts

Chris Smith

Mama Ros. Lehtinen

James J. Foley

Robert B. Adenroet

Phyllis Hart

Todd Tiahut

James B. Boney

Jim DeMint

W. Caldwell

Joseph R. Pitts

Bo Schaffer

Sue Myrick

Eric Cantor

John Sullivan